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Item 9 of the provisional agenda*
Preparations for the special session of the General Assembly on the world drug problem to be held in 2016

Organizational arrangements for the special session of the General Assembly on the world drug problem to be held in 2016

Note by the Secretariat

Summary

The present report provides information on the organization of the special segment, to be held during the fifty-ninth session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, on preparations for the special session of the General Assembly on the world drug problem to be held in 2016. It provides information on the status of preparations for the special session, including ongoing deliberations on the elaboration of the outcome document and on the organizational arrangements for the five interactive, multi-stakeholder round tables to be conducted during the special session.

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I. Mandate and background

1. The General Assembly, in its resolution 67/193, decided to convene, early in 2016, a special session on the world drug problem to review progress in the implementation of the Political Declaration and Plan of Action on International Cooperation towards an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to Counter the World Drug Problem, including an assessment of the achievements and challenges in countering the world drug problem, within the framework of the three international drug control conventions and other relevant United Nations instruments.

2. In its resolution 68/197, the General Assembly requested the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, as the United Nations organ with prime responsibility for drug control matters, to engage in the preparatory process for the special session, including by presenting proposals from the fifty-seventh and fifty-eighth sessions of the Commission through the Economic and Social Council in support of the preparatory process, including on progress made in the implementation of the Political Declaration and Plan of Action, to be considered by the Assembly starting at its sixty-ninth session.

3. In its resolution 69/200, the General Assembly decided that the Commission, as the central policymaking body within the United Nations system dealing with drug-related matters, should lead the preparatory process of the special session of the Assembly by addressing all organizational and substantive matters in an open-ended manner, and invited the President of the Assembly to support, guide and stay involved in the process.

4. In that resolution, the General Assembly invited organs, entities and specialized agencies of the United Nations system, multilateral development banks, other relevant international organizations, including the International Narcotics Control Board, and regional organizations to contribute fully to the preparations for the special session in 2016, in particular by submitting to the Commission, through the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, specific recommendations on the issues to be addressed at the special session.

5. The Assembly recognized the important role played by civil society, in particular non-governmental organizations, in the preparations for and during the fifty-second and fifty-seventh sessions of the Commission, including their high-level segments. It further recognized the need for their active involvement in the preparations for the special session, as well as the need for their effective, substantive and active involvement during the special session, in accordance with the rules of procedure and practice developed for other special sessions of the General Assembly, and requested the Chair of the Commission to consider undertaking consultations and other appropriate actions in that regard with relevant stakeholders.

6. Further to its resolution 57/5, and to ensure an adequate inclusive and effective preparatory process, the Commission established a website for the special session (www.ungass2016.org) to enable global dialogue in an inclusive and transparent manner. All relevant United Nations entities, international and regional organizations and non-governmental organizations have been invited to send written contributions. All contributions received have been posted on the website.

Presentations made during the intersessional meetings and during interactive informal discussions and side events are also available on the website.

7. At its reconvened fifty-seventh session in December 2014, the Commission adopted decision 57/2, pursuant to which a Board tasked by the Commission with preparations for the special session was established. The Board is in charge of organizing all actions to be taken by the Commission in preparation for the special session, by addressing all organizational and substantive matters, in an open-ended manner, in preparation for and during the special segments of sessions of the Commission devoted to the preparations. The Board was elected on the basis of the regional distribution of officers of the Bureau of the fifty-seventh session of the Commission and facilitates the participation of all States Members and observers of the United Nations, along with organs, entities and specialized agencies of the United Nations system, multilateral development banks and other relevant international and regional organizations, parliamentarians, the scientific community and civil society, in particular non-governmental organizations, in the preparations of the Commission for the special session.

8. At its regular fifty-eighth session in March 2015, the Commission adopted resolution 58/8 and recommended to the Economic and Social Council the approval of a draft resolution for adoption by the General Assembly defining the modalities for the special session on the world drug problem. The special segment on the preparations for the special session, held during the regular fifty-eighth session of the Commission, consisted of a general debate followed by five interactive discussions on the following thematic areas: (a) demand reduction and related measures, including prevention and treatment, as well as health-related issues; and ensuring the availability of controlled substances for medical and scientific purposes, while preventing their diversion ("drugs and health"); (b) supply reduction and related measures; responses to drug-related crime; and countering money-laundering and promoting judicial cooperation ("drugs and crime"); (c) cross-cutting issues: drugs and human rights, youth, women, children and communities; (d) cross-cutting issues: new challenges, threats and realities in preventing and addressing the world drug problem in compliance with relevant international law, including the three international drug control conventions; strengthening the principle of common and shared responsibility and international cooperation; and (e) alternative development; regional, interregional and international cooperation on development-oriented balanced drug control policy; addressing socioeconomic issues. Members of the Board chaired the interactive discussions and presented a summary of the outcome of their respective discussions at the closing session of the special segment.

9. At the same session, the Commission adopted decision 58/15 containing the preliminary provisional agenda for the special segment to be held during its fifty-ninth session. The provisional agenda and the proposed organization of work for the special segment are contained in annexes I and II.

10. The General Assembly adopted resolution 70/181, entitled "Special session of the General Assembly on the world drug problem to be held in 2016", on 17 December 2015. In the resolution, the Assembly decided that the special session would be held from 19 to 21 April 2016 and would consist of a general debate and five interactive, multi-stakeholder round tables conducted in parallel to the plenary. In addition to the provisions related to the preparations for the

elaboration of the outcome document and the preparations for the conduct of the round tables, the resolution contains provisions related to the opening of the special session and the general debate, on the participation of non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council and the participation of representatives of other relevant non-governmental organizations, civil society and the scientific community, academia, youth groups and other relevant stakeholders that may participate in the special session, with due regard to geographical balance. In resolution 70/181, the Assembly also requested the Commission, as the entity leading the preparations for the special session by addressing all organizational and substantive matters, to report to it at its special session on the preparations that have been undertaken for the session, through the Chair of the Board tasked by the Commission with those preparations. It further reiterated the importance of an inclusive preparatory process, including extensive substantive consultations, and encouraged organs, entities and specialized agencies of the United Nations system, relevant international and regional organizations, civil society, academia, the scientific community and other relevant stakeholders to continue to fully contribute to the process by actively participating in the preparations undertaken by the Commission, in accordance with relevant rules of procedure and established practice.

11. At its reconvened fifty-eighth session in December 2015, the Commission adopted decision 58/16, thereby further defining arrangements for the five interactive round tables, to be held at the special session. Detailed information is contained in section III of the present report.

II. Elaboration of the outcome document

12. In paragraph 5 of resolution 70/181, the General Assembly requested the Commission to produce a short, substantive, concise and action-oriented document comprising a set of operational recommendations, based upon a review of the implementation of the 2009 Political Declaration and Plan of Action, including an assessment of the achievements as well as ways to address long-standing and emerging challenges in countering the world drug problem, within the framework of the three international drug control conventions and other relevant United Nations instruments. That document, to be recommended for adoption at the plenary of the special session, should, inter alia, address measures to reach an effective balance between supply and demand reduction and address the key causes and consequences of the world drug problem, including those in the health, social, human rights, economic, justice and security fields, in line with the principle of common and shared responsibility.

13. At the invitation of the Board tasked by the Commission with preparations for the special session, on 12 June 2015 Member States provided, through their respective regional representatives on the Board, proposals for consideration in the preparation of the outcome document. By the deadline set for mid-September, more than 180 pages of proposals had been received, which have been compiled into a comprehensive package and circulated to all Member States through the members of the Board.

14. A timeline consisting of two phases was agreed upon during the intersessional meeting of the Commission on 24 September 2015. During the first phase of the elaboration of the outcome document, in accordance with the timeline agreed upon, Member States focused predominantly on shaping the main elements to be included in that document. In that regard, the Board shared with the Commission three versions of an "elements paper", for further consideration by Member States. The updates reflected the feedback received by Member States during informal consultations and intersessional meetings held on 15 October, 12 November and 8 December 2015. The elements paper, as discussed, updated and fine-tuned during the first phase, provided the foundation for the elaboration of the draft outcome document.

15. The Board presented a first draft of the outcome document on 14 January 2016 and since then several revised versions have been prepared, based on the comments received during multiple rounds of informal consultations and the intersessional meetings held on 27 January and 24 February 2016.

16. The Commission is expected to approve the draft outcome document at its fifty-ninth session in March 2016 for onward submission to the General Assembly.

III. Organizational arrangements for the interactive multi-stakeholder round tables

17. Pursuant to operative paragraph 3 (f) of resolution 70/181, the General Assembly decided that the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, as the entity leading the preparations for the special session, should address in an open-ended manner, supported and guided by the President of the General Assembly, the organizational arrangements, including chairing arrangements, speakers and participation, for the five interactive multi-stakeholder round tables, while considering the Political Declaration and Plan of Action, in line with General Assembly resolutions 67/193 and 69/201.

18. The themes of the five interactive multi-stakeholder round tables were also listed in paragraph 3 (f) of resolution 70/181, which are identical to the themes of the five interactive discussions, held during the special segment of the fifty-eighth session of the Commission in March 2015.

A. Themes of the interactive, multi-stakeholder round tables

19. Pursuant to operative paragraph 3 (f) of General Assembly resolution 70/181, the interactive multi-stakeholder round tables will focus on the following themes:

(a) Round table 1: Demand reduction and related measures, including prevention and treatment, as well as health-related issues; and ensuring the availability of controlled substances for medical and scientific purposes, while preventing their diversion ("drugs and health"):

(i) Demand reduction and related measures, including prevention and treatment, as well as health-related issues, including HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment and care;

(ii) Ensuring the availability of controlled substances for medical and scientific purposes, while preventing their diversion;

(b) Round table 2: Supply reduction and related measures; responses to drug-related crime; and countering money-laundering and promoting judicial cooperation ("drugs and crime"):

(i) Domestic, regional and cross-regional responses to drug-related crime; and countering money-laundering, including, where appropriate, in connection with the financing of terrorism, and promoting judicial cooperation in criminal matters;

(ii) Addressing emerging issues, including new psychoactive substances, precursors and the misuse of the Internet;

(c) Round table 3: Cross-cutting issues: drugs and human rights, youth, women, children and communities:

(i) Addressing drug-related issues in full conformity with the purposes and the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, international law and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other relevant international law, including the three drug control conventions;

(ii) Drugs and youth, women, children and communities;

(d) Round table 4: Cross-cutting issues: new challenges, threats and realities in preventing and addressing the world drug problem in compliance with relevant international law, including the three drug control conventions; strengthening the principle of common and shared responsibility and international cooperation:

(i) New challenges, threats and realities in preventing and addressing the world drug problem in compliance with relevant international law, including the three drug control conventions;

(ii) Strengthening the principle of common and shared responsibility and enhancing international cooperation, including technical assistance, leading up to 2019;

(e) Round table 5: Alternative development; regional, interregional and international cooperation on development-oriented balanced drug control policy; addressing socioeconomic issues:

(i) Drugs, addressing socioeconomic issues and fostering alternative development, including preventive alternative development;

(ii) Enhancing regional, interregional and international cooperation on development-oriented, balanced drug control policy.

B. Organizational arrangements for the interactive, multi-stakeholder round tables

20. In accordance with decision 58/16, adopted by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs at its reconvened fifty-eighth session, the five round tables will be scheduled as follows:

- 19 April 2016 from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.
- 20 April 2016 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.
- 21 April 2016 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m.

21. All States Members of the United Nations, observer States and observers, including relevant international organizations with observer status and entities of the United Nations system, as well as representatives of non-governmental organizations, representatives of civil society and the scientific community, academia, youth groups and other relevant stakeholders participating in the special session, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 70/181, are invited to participate in the interactive, multi-stakeholder round tables.

22. By decision 58/16, the Commission decided that the round tables would be co-chaired by two representatives of two different regional groups: one of the Co-Chairs should be a member of the Board and the other from a different regional group, to be nominated by the respective regional group at United Nations Headquarters and appointed by the President of the General Assembly. Furthermore, each round table would consist of a panel composed of six panellists, five of whom were to be nominated by regional groups and one by the civil society task force for the special session. The panel could further include up to two speakers from the entities of the United Nations system. The interventions by the panellists would be followed by an interactive discussion and, in order to accommodate as many speakers as possible, interventions by the panellists would be limited to a maximum of five minutes and interventions from the floor to a maximum of three minutes. The Commission further decided that a summary of the salient points raised during the round tables would be prepared by the Chairs of those round tables and presented at the plenary. Those summaries, as read out, would be included in their entirety in the verbatim records of the plenary meetings of the special session, following the standard procedures of special sessions.

23. Pursuant to decision 58/16 of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, the President of the General Assembly, by a letter dated 19 February 2016, asked regional groups to submit their nominations for a second Co-Chair (in addition to their respective member of the Board) and nominations for panellists. Regional groups were requested to provide their nominations at the latest by 10 March, with a view to making that information available to the fifty-ninth session of the Commission. The Chairs of the regional groups in New York were thereby invited to work closely with the Chairs of the regional groups in Vienna.

Annex I

Provisional agenda for the special segment to be held during the fifty-ninth session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, on preparations for the special session of the General Assembly on the world drug problem to be held in 2016

1. Opening of the special segment.
2. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters.
3. Preparations for the special session of the General Assembly on the world drug problem to be held in 2016:
   (a) Consideration of the draft provisional agenda of the special session, including preparations for the interactive, multi-stakeholder round tables;
   (b) Consideration of the outcome of the special session;
   (c) Consideration of any other matters.
4. Other business.
5. Outcome and closure of the special segment.

Annex II

Proposed organization of work for the special segment to be held during the fifty-ninth session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, on preparations for the special session of the General Assembly on the world drug problem to be held in 2016

Date	*Time*	*Item*	*Title or description*
Monday, 14 March	10.15 a.m.-1 p.m.	9	Preparations for the special session of the General Assembly on the world drug problem to be held in 2016
			Opening of the special segment
			Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters
			Preparations for the special session of the General Assembly on the world drug problem to be held in 2016:
			(a) Consideration of the draft provisional agenda of the special session, including preparations for the interactive, multi-stakeholder round tables
			(b) Consideration of the outcome of the special session
			(c) Consideration of any other matters
	3-6 p.m.		Preparations for the special session of the General Assembly on the world drug problem to be held in 2016 (*continued*)
Tuesday, 15 March	10.15 a.m.-1 p.m.		Preparations for the special session of the General Assembly on the world drug problem to be held in 2016 (*continued*)
	3-6 p.m.		Preparations for the special session of the General Assembly on the world drug problem to be held in 2016 (*continued*)
Wednesday, 16 March	10.15 a.m.-1 p.m.		Other business
	3-6 p.m.		Outcome and closure of the special segment